

It's The Economy, Stupid

By Leo Jakobson

Incentive's 2009 Travel IQ survey shows the economy had a much bigger impact than public perception

In the year of the AIG effect, the most topical part of *Incentive's* 2009 Travel IQ survey was the question that asked, "Have you changed or canceled any incentive travel in the past year, and if so, why?"

The answer, intriguingly enough, is that the bad publicity resulting from the media and political attacks on incentive travel seems to have had relatively little impact on incentive travel. For all the attention paid to President Barack Obama's "You can't go to Las Vegas" comment (which was effectively withdrawn after the impact on that city's business tourism became clear), less than 5 percent of our survey respondents said they had canceled any programs due to public perception issues.

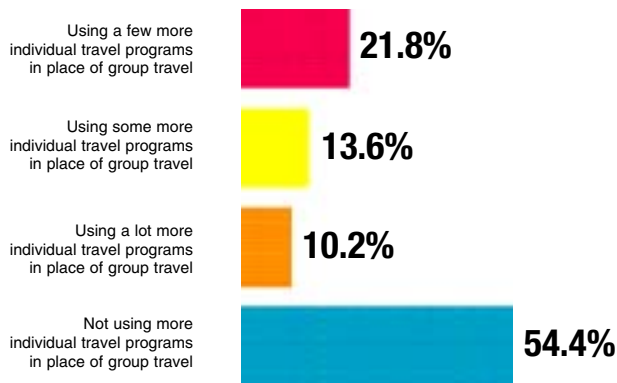
But exactly twice that number, nearly 10 percent, canceled all of their programs due to the economic crisis. And an additional 20 percent canceled some of their programs for that reason, while nearly 17 percent changed some or all programs. Only 13 percent said a combination of the economy and negative perception altered their plans.

But add all those numbers up, and you'll see that barely one-third said they had not changed or canceled any incentive travel plans. Which suggests that former President Bill Clinton's 17-year-old campaign slogan still applies: It's the economy, stupid.

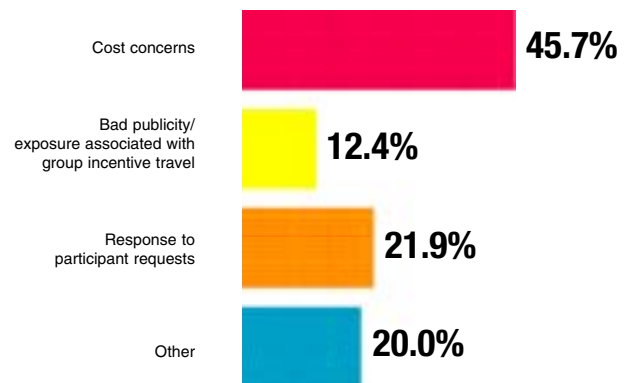


Economic Crisis / AIG Effect

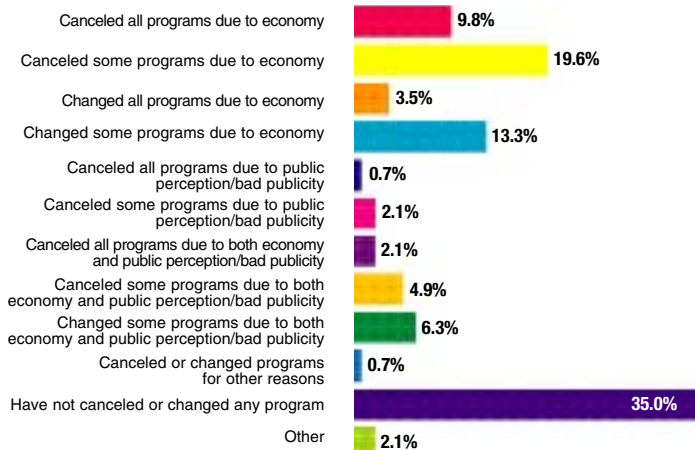
1. To what extent, if any, are you using individual incentive travel programs in place of group travel programs this year?



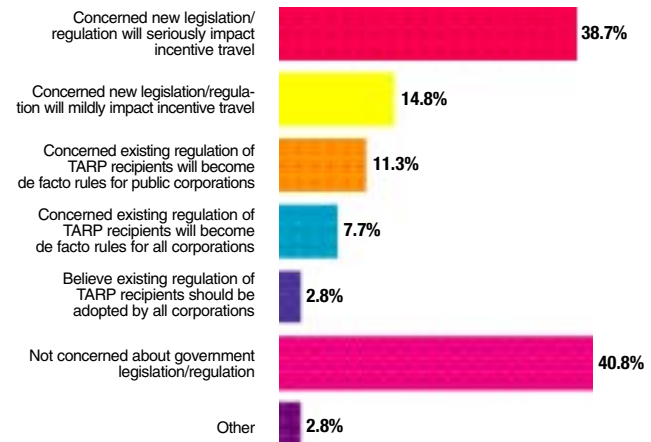
2. Why are you using more individual travel programs in place of group travel this year?



3. Have you changed or canceled any incentive travel in the past year, and if so, why?

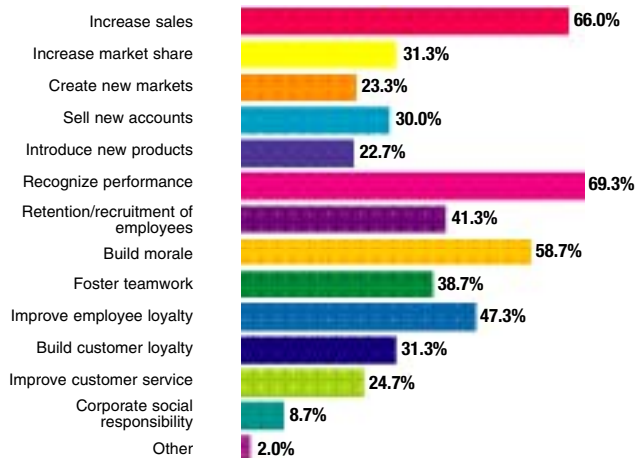


4. Are you concerned that the government will pass legislation/create regulations that will impact the incentive travel business?

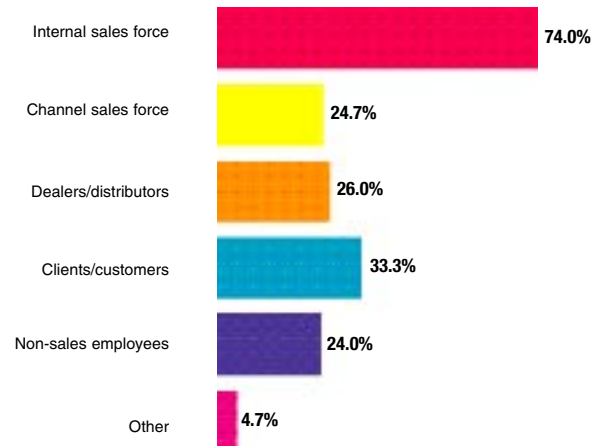


General Incentive Travel Issues

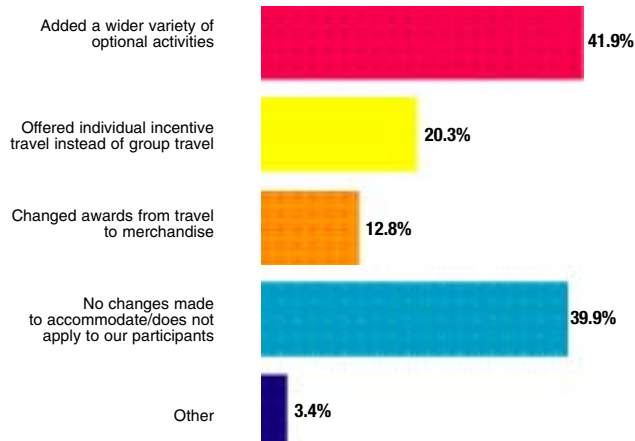
5. What are the primary benefits your company associates with incentive travel programs?



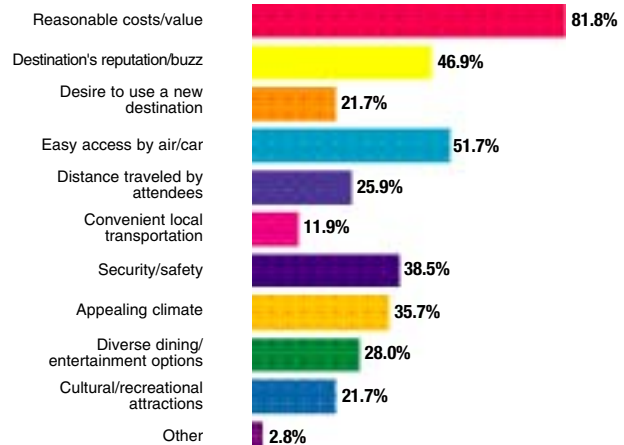
6. What audiences typically participate in your incentive travel programs?



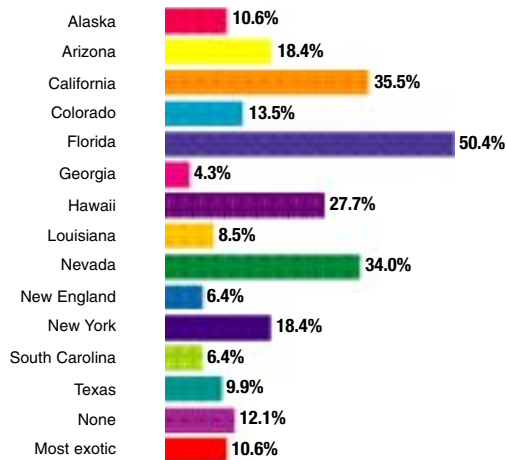
7. What changes, if any, have you had to make to your incentive travel programs to accommodate a diverse group of participants?



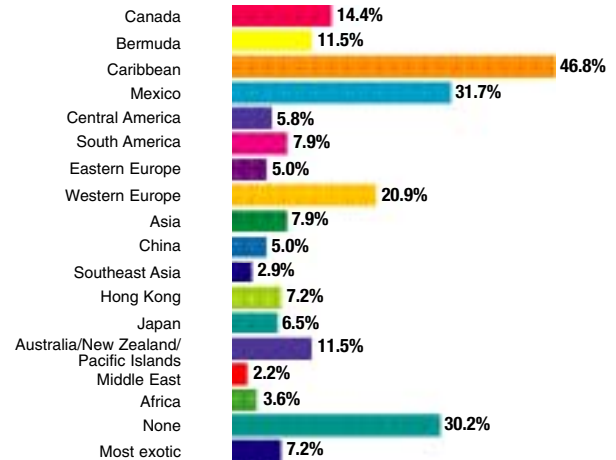
8. Which of the following are the most important criteria when evaluating a destination for your incentive travel programs?



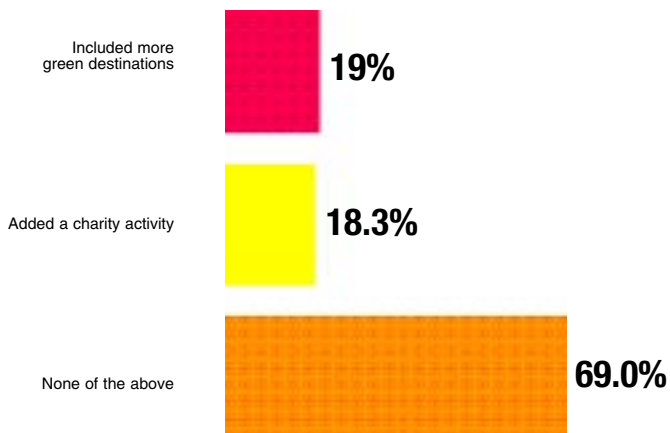
9. Which of the following domestic destinations are the most popular for your incentive travel programs in 2009?



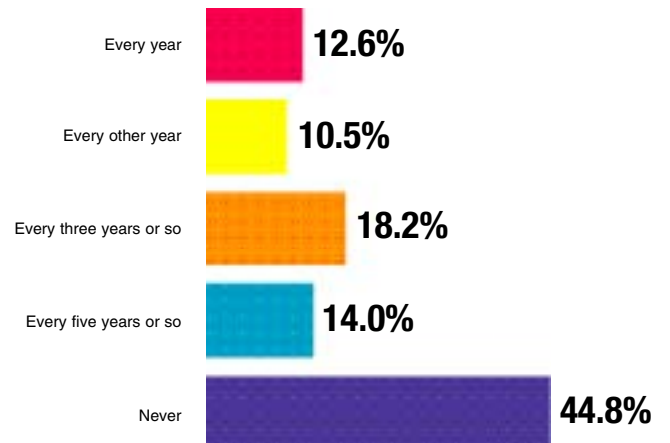
10. Which of the following international destinations are the most popular for your incentive travel programs in 2009?



11. Which of the following have you implemented this past year in your incentive travel programs?



12. How often do you use cruises for your incentive travel programs?





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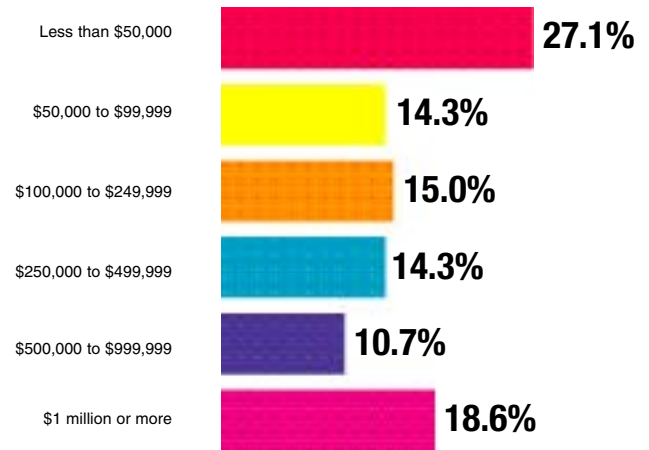
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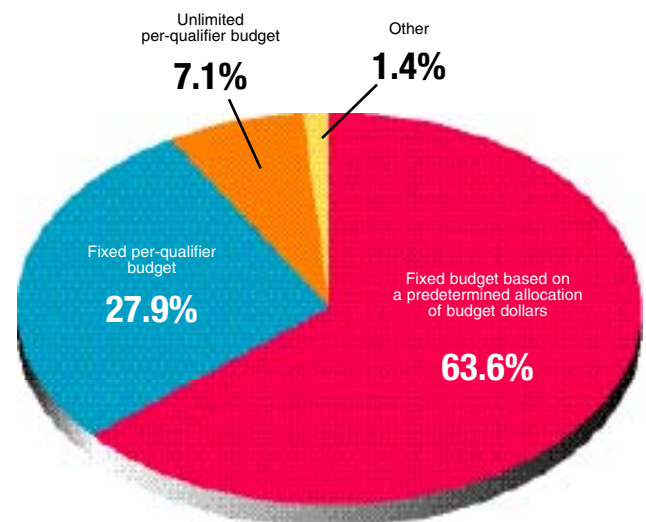
Travel **IQ**

Budget Issues

13. What is your entire organization's incentive travel budget for 2009?



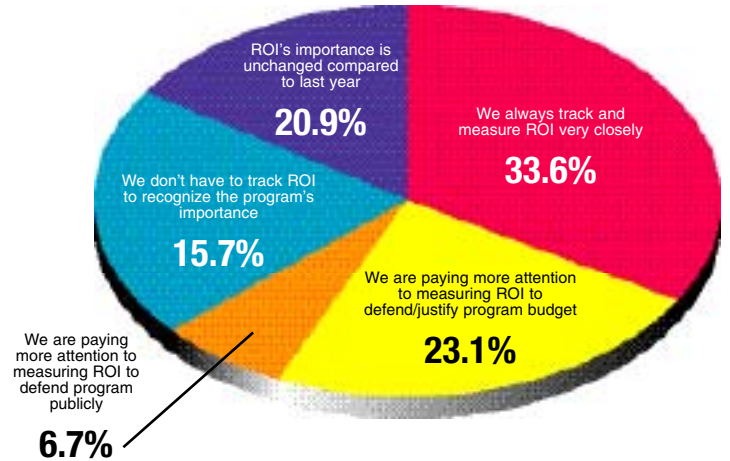
14. Which of the following incentive travel program budgeting methods best describes your process?



15. If you are cutting your program budget, where are the savings coming from?



16. How important is measuring the return on investment of your program compared to last year?



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